Pope's Swiss Guard Preparing to Celebrate its Fourth Centenary

Was First Originated by Julius II, the "Fighting Pope"--Its Members Barricaded Themselves in St. Peter's When the Constable, De Bourbon, Sacked the Eternal City, and Were All Killed. Men Have an Easy Time of It Nowadays.

BARON MEYER, COMMANDER OF THE SWISS GUARD, AND COLONEL PYFFER.

Rome, October 14.

THAT most picturesque relic of the days when the Papacy exercised something like real temporal power, the Swiss Guard, is preparing to celebrate the fourth centenary of its formation. There are four other Papal corps, and one of them, the Noble Guard, is of still more ancient origin, dating back to 1488, but the Swiss Guard has long attracted most attention among visitors to the Eternal City. This has aroused the jealousy of the other bodies comprising the little Papal army, for, alas! envy, malice, and uncharitableness can exist even within the confines of the Apostolic Palace. In case of an attack it certainly would not be "united we stand," but decidedly "divided we fall."

The Swiss Guard now consists of 100 stalwart young Catholics from German Switzerland. They watch over the various entrances to the palace and are responsible for the personal safety of the Pontiff. They are armed with Remington breech-loaders and also carry halberds which, with their quaint scarlet, black, and yellow uniforms, supply something more than a hint of the medieval times which called them into existence. The Pope is entering with great zest into the preparations for their centenary and at his own expense a commemorative medal will be struck off in honor of the occasion.

The Guard owes its origin to Pope Julius II, who was known as the "fighting Pope." In fact, he is said to have thrown the keys of St. Peter into the Tiber, having more use for the sword of St. Paul and the halberds of his Swiss Guard. He also loved the arts, patronized Michael Angelo and Bramante, added to the Vatican Library, and laid the cornerstone of the new Basilica of St. Peter's.

The Original Guard.

In October, 1505, he brought from Switzerland 200 Swiss youths, commanded by Gaspare de Silenen, a nobleman of Lucerne, who subsequently died in Rome. He constituted them his own personal bodyguard, designating them officially "Pretoriani excubitores Pontificis corporis et palatii costodiae"—"Pretorian guards of the person and palace of the Pope." The idea of such a guard did not originate with Julius II, but with his predecessor, Nicholas V. This Pontiff, however, was afraid to carry the idea out in face of the opposition of Louis XII, who threatened to do a lot of unholy things if the project was not abandoned.

Julius II was not easily intimidated, and finding the idea to his taste, lost no time in giving effect to it. But the poor Swiss subsequently had to pay for his rashness with their lives. In the Pontificate of Clement VII the terrible Constable de Bourbon led a force against Rome and sacked the city. The guards barricaded themselves in St. Peter's and sold their lives dearly, but he got them all; not one escaped. For twenty-one years thereafter no effort was made to re-form this Guard, but in 1548, under Paul III, it was again organized.

It has existed ever since with two short interruptions, during the French occupations of 1798 and 1809, but it returned with Pius VII and is still here, clothed as of yore, and quite as ferocious looking. The design of their peculiar uniform, of yellow, scarlet, and black cloth, which in print suggests a harlequin, but does not look like one, has been variously ascribed to Michael Angelo, Raphael, Bramante, and other artists. The Swiss themselves like to think that it was the illustrious Michael Angelo who dressed them, and there is no reason to suppose that the great artist's diverse talents did not also include proficiency in the sartorial art.

Curtailed Their Perquisites.

Their commander is Baron Meyer de Schaeuesee of Lucerne, as whoever holds this commission is obliged to be a Swiss, a noble, and of a Lucerne family. Baron Meyer himself married into the Roman aristocracy, while his son has an American wife. The commandant's father, the late baron, also commandant, had much to do in the quelling of a little mutiny among the Swiss Guard on the accession of Leo XIII to the Papal throne. Even then—or rather, especially then—the finances of the Vatican were not florid, and the "new broom," as was satirically termed the incoming Pontiff, decided to make a clean sweep of one of their privileges, which was not set down on paper, though sanctioned by custom. This was the payment of $100 to each member of the force for his extra work during the conclave, or "sede vacante," as it is called. Thirty of the boldest, backed by the moral support of their comrades, took their arms, barricaded themselves in their barracks and declared war! Neither prayers, nor threats, nor bribes, could move them. Nothing but their money would satisfy them and when that, after three days, was forthcoming, they came forth, too. But Leo XIII had his revenge, as he kept them waiting twenty-five years for the next "sede vacante," while the average length of a Pontificate is only from six to eight years.

The colonel of the Guard is Karl Pyffer d'Altishofen of Lucerne, whose family is inextricably mixed with the history of the Swiss Guard.

SWISS GUARDS IN GALA UNIFORM

Already nine of the same house have held the post of commandant, and there is no doubt Pyffer held the post in 1652 under Clement X. The family, of course, comes from Lucerne, but the branch to which Colonel Karl belongs had long been domiciled in the Eternal City. He is most indefatigable in the interests of his "boys," and the oncoming festivities are mostly due to his activity.

Officers Got Small Pay.

The guards themselves sign for five years' service, which can be renewed if they wish. After twenty-five years' service they have a pension, but they can only rise from the ranks to the grade of colonel. The men, on the whole, have little to complain of. Their pay is $16 a month, and as they are obliged to be unmarried, it quite suffices. The officers, of whom there are six, of course get very small pay, the position being more honorary than anything else, and bringing prestige as compensation. The corps is lodged in magnificent quarters in the Vatican, near Porta Angelica, with every modern convenience. The service, although somewhat heavy, cannot be said to be of great responsibility, and the men have many free hours in which, in mufti, they are often seen about the streets of Rome. They are not allowed to wear their uniforms outside of Papal territory; that would be going armed into a foreign country!

Their flag, which may be seen waving over their barracks, is of red, yellow, and very dark blue stripes, with the arms of the reigning Pontiff on one side and on the reverse those of the actual commandant. It is a highly artistic production, as are, for that matter, the guards themselves, and it is probably only in this light that they are regarded by strangers, who are apt to think that they are put in their places only to look pretty and appropriate.

Figured in Yellow Journalism.

The whole army of the Pontiff is composed of five armed corps, the Noble, Swiss, and Palatine Guards, gendarmes and firemen, comprising 390 men, more or less, probably a few more.

During Leo XIII's Pontificate Rome was startled one day by an enormous headline in one of the leading papers, "Mobilization of the Army," and, thinking that war must be upon her, looked feverishly for further news, whereupon the words "of the Pope" were revealed in much smaller type, and the Eternal City breathed freely again. These maneuvers, announced with such pomp and solemnity, were a new thing in the Vatican since the fall of the Temporal Power, and occupied a month in the Vatican garden. It must be confessed that the men and officers showed themselves somewhat rusty from long disuse, and came out of it with aching bones and somewhat stiff limbs. Leo XIII used often to go into the garden to witness the maneuvers, and it is, perhaps, just as well that he was not a military man, as he might have seen much to criticise, while in reality he was greatly delighted.

GATE OF THE SWISS GUARD AT THE PALACE OF THE VATICAN, ROME.

Castle of Commerce for Which William Waldorf Astor Gets a Vote

Palatial Estate Office on the Thames Embankment Which Is Officially Declared to Be His London Abode—Contains Securities Worth Millions, and Is Believed to Be the Strongest Building in the Metropolis After the Bank of England

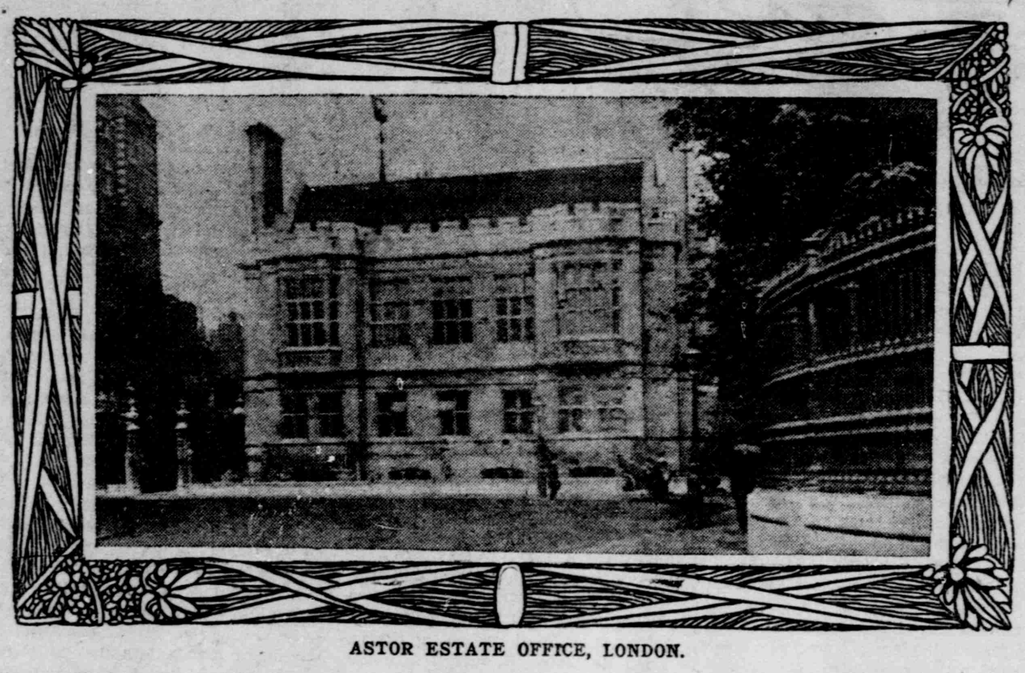
London, Oct. 7.

WHEN William Waldorf Astor became a naturalized British subject he lost his right to vote in America, of course, but as compensation he gained several votes in England. That is because here the exercise of the suffrage is made dependent on property qualifications, and a man who possesses residences in different parts of the country gets a vote for each one of them, subject to compliance with certain conditions. Mr. Astor has proved himself a good British citizen to the extent, at least, of claiming all the votes he is entitled to. He has recently, as most Americans have doubtless heard, successfully upheld his right to vote on account of the Astor estate office, the beautiful castle of commerce which he has built on the Thames embankment.

Mr. Astor is a Conservative, the party which above all others stands for vested interests and the sacred rights of property. The Liberals favor the principle of one man one vote. It was a Liberal agent who sought to reduce Mr. Astor's votes by depriving him of the one which stood to the credit of his estate office. He contended that it could not be correctly described as one of Mr. Astor's places of abode since he had ascertained by inquiry that Mr. Astor never slept there. But the Conservative agent won a triumph for the great landlord by producing a letter from his private secretary which read:

"Mr. Astor's place of abode is correctly described in the overseer's list. It is true that Mr. Astor has a house in Carlton House terrace, but except for two or three nights in the year he resides at this office when he is in London."

The building was designed by the architect of Truro Cathedral, and it is a model of grace, beauty, and strength. It is believed to be the strongest building in London after the Bank of England. Well it may be. In its strong rooms are stored securities representing millions—just how many millions only Mr. Astor himself knows. Internally it reflects the severe methodical formality which characterizes the owner. All the walls are richly paneled with polished oak, the hardwood floors glisten like those of a ballroom, the single oaken bench for waiting visitors is as stiff and uninviting as a marble seat in a mausoleum. There are no curves anywhere—only right angles. Behind a long, glittering counter, topped by a wondrous iron grille, are two clerks who also appear to have been carved out of oak, and who sit stiffly at marvelously neat oaken desks bearing huge volumes. Beyond a polished vestibule, severely unadorned, is another room, likewise oaken and severely plain, where sits the Astor solicitor—an exact man, surrounded by neat documents recording with phenomenal exactness every transaction in which the Astor estate has been involved. In the rooms beyond are Mr. Astor's private offices, and on the floor above is a severely beautiful oaken hall where Mr. Astor occasionally gives chillingly formal banquets. The whole place is oppressively suggestive of undeviating business exactitude and methodical rigidity. Mirth would seem as much out of place there as in a tomb.



ASTOR ESTATE OFFICE, LONDON.

HOW PUSHBALL IS PLAYED.

Pushball is played on a gridironed field or floor 120 yards long by 50 wide, with goal posts at either end 20 feet apart and connected by a cross bar 7 feet from the ground.

The mammoth ball, almost globular in shape, should measure six feet in diameter and weigh between forty-eight and fifty pounds. It is usually inflated with compressed air.

The ball is placed in the middle of the field and the teams line up as follows: Five forwards on the 40-yard line, two left and two right wings on the 20-yard line and two goal keepers on the goal line—eleven men each. At the sound of the referee's whistle both sides plunge at full speed upon the ball.

If the ball is caught fairly between the two human battering rams there is a rebound from its elastic sides that sends the players sprawling like tenpins. It does not take long, however, for the entire twenty-two men to get around the sphere, put their shoulders to the wheel, so to speak, and push for every ounce of energy in them. The heavier, stronger team will, of course, have the advantage, but some trick plays have been invented which lend variety to the game and redeem it from being a featureless contest of mere brawn and muscle.—National Magazine.

MY BOOKS.

They dwell in an odor of camphor,
They stand in a Sheraton shrine,
They are "warranted early editions,"
These wonderful books of mine;

In their cream colored "Oxford vellum,"
In their redolent "crushed Levant,"
With their delicate "watered linings,"
They are jewels of price, I grant;

"Blind-tooled and "morocco-jointed,"
They have Zaehnsdorf's daintiest dress,
They are graceful, attenuate, polished,
But they gather the dust, no less;

For the row that I prize is yonder,
Away on the unglazed shelves,
The bulged and the bruised octavos,
The dear and the dumpy twelves—

Montaigne with his sheepskin blistered,
And Howell the worse for wear,
And the worm-drilled Jesuit's Horace,
And the little old cropped Moliere—

And the Burton I bought for a fourpence,
And the Rabelais foxed and flea'd—
For the others I never have opened,
But these are the ones I read.

—Austin Dobson.

Flexibility of the English Language

SOME day the phonograph will be improved so that ordinary conversation can be caught and preserved in tins for examination by future generations of school men, says the Brooklyn Eagle. Only think what an advantage it would be to us if somebody had invented the talking machine in Chaucer's time. We should know the English speech for a different matter from that which now appears to us.

Lamentations are heard now and again over the disappearance of flexibility in our language. We say that it is losing its poetry, its symbolism, that it has ceased to grow, that it no longer expresses shades of meaning.

What rubbish! The fact is, that for one way of expressing a thought in Shakespeare's day we have a dozen on the Bowery in this twentieth century. Suppose for a moment that the perfected phonograph has overheard and recorded a dialogue on the East Side between a resident and a missionary, and some philologist or etymologist or the curator of fossil expressions finds the record a century hence and puts it into the machine to do a turn. What a disclosure it would be of the fertility and variety of our English language. Imagine a bit of it:

Has a Bun.

Missionary—Is that man ill?

Tammany Statesman—Naw; he's got a bun.

"I didn't observe that he was eating buns."

"Come off! I said, he's got a skate."

"Skating in summer! How very unusual!"

"Rats! What's dis you're givin' us? Dat galoot's got a slant—he's all lighted up—he's full o' budge—booze—bug juice."

"What an extraordinary variety of afflictions! Is it catching—any of it?"

"What—jags catchin'? Gee, I wish dey was. I'd get near meself."

"Jags? I understood you to say it was buns."

"So I did. It's de same t'ing. He's on a bat."

Didn't See the Bat.

"I didn't happen to notice any bat."

"Well, you're a blind one. You want to get next to a spetticle factory, you do. Why, you could see a mulligan like that half a mile."

"Is his name Mulligan?"

"I dunno what his name is. I said he's got a brannigan."

"Dear, me! Won't you tell me what is the matter with the man?"

"You make me tired. I been tellin' you for de last half hour. He's been hittin' de can—chasin' de duck—rushin' de growler. He's been strainin' red-eye troo his face. He's been paintin' his tonsils wit' Delancy street varnish. He's getting snakes. De menagerie is after him. But de cops is wise. Dey'll have de hurry wagon out."

"It must be dreadful to be so afflicted."

"Afflicted nothin'! He's up to de neck in purple joy."

"I cannot understand."

"Ah, fade away! Back to de bucksaw. Can't ye tell when a jay like dat has been lookin' at de rosy?"

"Who is Rosie?"

"G'wan, youz! He's drunk."

BRIEF RESPITE.

The hot wave now doth pass away
And leave us all unvexed.
The weather bureau will display
The cold wave signal next.

—Cleveland Leader.

Lives Comfortably on $10 a Year

Delton, Wis.

AMONG the interesting sights of Mirror Lake, Sauk county, is a log cabin which has been occupied more than forty years by George Skinner, who lives comfortably on $10 a year. "Grandpa," as he is affectionately called by his neighbors, has had none of civilization's luxuries nor comforts. For forty years he has earned his food and returned to his cabin to prepare it for himself. His bed is a straw pallet. The walls of the little home are bare.

Recently to a party of tourists he said:

"Right here in my little cabin I am richer than John D. Rockefeller. My $10 brings me what all his millions cannot buy—years of perfect happiness."

Bought an Acre.

When Skinner was mustered out after the war of the rebellion he had money enough to buy an acre of ground on the shores of Mirror Lake. He built a cabin. In his acre of ground he planted vegetables and fruit trees. Close to the house grew blackberry bushes, and in the garden behind are strawberries. Over the fence that separates the yard from the road are wild roses.

Each day he takes his fishing rod and goes to Mirror Lake. That is his pork barrel. The fish that he draws out of those waters supplies his dinner, likewise his breakfast. The vegetables and cornmeal grown in his garden complete his diet.

Lives Well.

For his fishing Skinner has built a boat as unique as himself. That he may fish and propel his boat at the same time he has at the stern of his boat a paddle like that of a river steamer. This is turned by means of a chain running on cogs and attached to a crank that the old man turns with one hand as he fishes with the other.

Skinner lives during the winter as well as he does in summer. From the abundance of one season he saves enough to meet the necessities of the other. During the summer he fishes continuously. He catches an average of 100 fish a day, mostly small ones. Ten of those suffice for his simple meals. The other ninety are cleaned and stored away in barrels of brine kept in the cellar of his cabin. When he has enough fish stored away to last through the winter he stops fishing, as he thinks it a sin to kill any creature except for food.

From his garden he cans his vegetables and berries. Everything that he needs is supplied from nature's "pork barrel."

The $10 which he spends annually goes for tobacco, fish hooks, and clothing.

BRIDEGROOM ANSWERS TOO SOON

He was embarrassed, ill at ease, she was calm, self-possessed.

"If it were only over," he whispered excitedly, "I know I'll do it wrong."

"It won't take long, John," she answered consolingly. "You haven't much to say."

The minister was speaking: "Kindly change places with bride."

John attempted to do so, and stepped on the toe of her boot, and raising his arm caught his cuffbutton in her veil.

"Do be careful," she implored.

"Oh," he groaned, "before all these staring people, too."

"Sh-h-h——"

The minister began the ceremony. John grew more embarrassed, and fumbled with the roses of her bouquet. Then he put his hand in his pocket and pulling out his handkerchief excitedly mopped his brow.

The church was quiet save for the voice of the minister.

"If any person knows any just reason," he was saying, "why these two should not be joined together let him now speak or forever——"

"I will!" shouted John—Baltimore Sun.